



(Top) Eugene Ware Elementary School in Fort Scott was constructed through the Public Works Administration in 1934. The Colonial Revival structure was designed by Glen H. Thomas of Wichita.



(Left) Long Island School in Phillips County, constructed in 1917, is an example of a Progressive Era, Commercial Style structure, common throughout the 1920s in Kansas. The building now houses Northern Valley Middle School.

classified as Progressive Era or Commercial Style. Most are red brick. The most common stylistic influence in Kansas was Collegiate Gothic; other popular influences included Classical, Colonial and Mission/Spanish Revivals, and Beaux Arts.

The city schools tended to embody the planning principles of the Progressive Era, but were generally more elaborate in their ornamentation. The first two decades of the twentieth century brought a transition in stylistic influences. Classical references were common with Classical Revival, Beaux Arts, Colonial, and Mission/Spanish Revival styles dominant

among the designs. By the end of World War I, Collegiate Gothic emerged as a dominant style for city schools. This period resulted in the first attempts to develop an architectural expression for schools. Monumentalism became the norm as growing communities designed schools as testaments to their devotion to education.

In city schools, plans reflected the expanded functions of schools; H-, T-, I-, and U-shaped plans became the norm and double-loaded corridors emerged. The buildings typically featured symmetrical facades with grand entrances and ornate foyers or lobbies. The flat or

low-pitched roofs had ornate parapets. The gymnasium, auditorium, and cafeteria became common features in city schools. Gymnasiums and auditoriums were located for ease of public access and many schools were built with two gymnasiums, one for boys and one for girls. This period in school design is recognized for the development of the academic classroom and an emphasis on safety and sanitation.

The Progressive Movement influenced the design of grade schools and high schools alike, and led to the emergence of the junior high school and the addition of kindergarten to the grade school curriculum. There were few obvious distinctions among the appearance of grade school, junior high, and high school buildings, although city high schools did tend to be designed on a grander scale. City high schools were usually centrally located because they served an entire city, while grade schools and junior high schools were located to



Lyons High School (now Lyons Middle School) is an Art Deco structure, designed by Mann and Company of Hutchinson in 1930. The school is an excellent example of an early modern school, in plan form and exterior design.

serve neighborhoods. Most city grade schools were designed with both auditoriums and gymnasiums. Kindergarten rooms were frequently distinguished by special treatments or forms and were embellished with interior features such as fireplaces and tiled drinking fountains. Grade schools typically had standard classrooms, seldom customized for specific use with the exception of art and music rooms. Junior high schools were essentially smaller versions of city high schools with classrooms designed to reflect specialized uses.

New Deal Era (1930-WWII)

Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal established the Work Progress Agency (WPA) and the Public Works Administration (PWA) to increase employment in the wake of the Depression, resulting in one of the greatest periods of school construction. The WPA (later Works Projects Administration) and the PWA (originally the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works) had a significant and unprecedented impact on public schools across the nation. Educational buildings represented the majority of projects funded through both programs. The New Deal programs funded improvements to public schools as well as the construction of new schools and school facilities, raising the expenditure level to that of the mid-1920s.

Schools constructed between the Depression and WWII reflected a change in architectural styles. Just as the

Progressive Era introduced the modern high school in terms of school facilities, the New Deal Era introduced modern architectural styles. The Moderne and Art Deco styles emerged as the dominant influences during this period. These schools are considered the first "modern" school buildings, more simplistic in form with flat roofs and limited ornamentation. Although the New Deal Era is credited with the emergence of the modern movement in design of schools, some schools designed through WPA and PWA programs maintained the architectural tenets of the Progressive Era. Varying architectural references included Collegiate Gothic, Colonial Revival, and Mission/Spanish Revival.

Where city schools often fully embraced these emerging new styles, town schools were often Progressive Era structures with Art Deco or Moderne stylistic details. Town high schools gained popularity toward the end of the Progressive Era, and many were constructed through the PWA and WPA programs in the 1930s. The county, rural, and community high schools varied stylistically from the typical town graded school, reflecting a transition from the Progressive Era to the Modern Era. The plans reflected the Progressive Era doctrine, many including specialized spaces like science laboratories and separate gymnasiums and auditoriums. These high schools typically had flat roofs with ornamentation limited to entrances and sometimes simple cornice bands.

The Modern School (WWI-Present)

Just as the Industrial Revolution led to the emergence of the public education system as a national priority and the Progressive Era led to the standardization of school design, the years following WWII are the period in which our modern education system took form. The post-war baby boom dictated prompt construction of larger schools. Significant new dollars were invested in school construction, but excessive ornament was seen as a waste of money. Following WWII, school design focused again on plan forms rather than architectural style; new varieties included finger or wing plans, open and flexible plans, and campus plans with multiple connected buildings. School design continued to be curriculum-based, but rather than public monuments the schools became more community-centered.

In the 1950s and 1960s, city schools began to be located near residential neighborhoods rather than in city centers. The growth in city schools was due primarily to the post-war baby boom, but it also reflected increased student populations from annexation and consolidation. The advent of suburban schools brought not only changes in locations of schools, but also drastic changes in their appearance. New construction materials and techniques provided inexpensive, lightweight construction that featured wide flexibility for interior spaces. Sprawling